

1 THE HONORABLE JOHN C. COUGHENOUR
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7 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
8 WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
9 AT SEATTLE

10 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

11 Plaintiff,

v.

12 KENNETH WARREN RHULE and
13 KENNETH JOHN RHULE,

14 Defendants.

15 CASE NO. CR20-0105-JCC

16 ORDER

17 This matter comes before the Court on the parties' joint stipulated motion to proceed with
18 Defendants' plea hearings by videoconference. (Dkt. No. 117.)

19 Under General Order 04-20, felony pleas and sentencing may proceed by video or
20 telephone conferencing if "the district judge in a particular case finds for specific reasons that the
21 plea or sentencing in that case cannot be further delayed without serious harm to the interests of
22 justice." *See also* W.D. Wash. General Order 14-21 (Dec. 22, 2021) (extending the duration of
General Order 04-20).

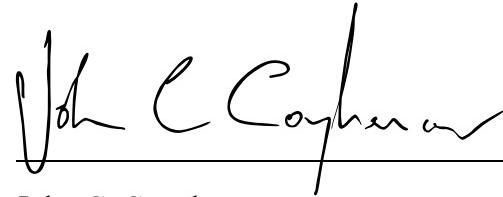
23 Having thoroughly considered the motion and the relevant record, the Court FINDS that
24 further delay in the absence of a remote plea hearing would seriously harm the interests of
25 justice. The following specific reasons support this finding: (1) the parties have reached a plea
26 agreement, and not holding the hearing by videoconference or other remote means could

1 unnecessarily delay resolution of the case; (2) not conducting the plea hearing remotely could
2 unnecessarily prolong the present state of uncertainty; (3) Defendant Kenneth Warren Rhule is
3 currently located in Florida; and (4) Defendant Kenneth Warren Rhule has consented to proceed
4 remotely, and the Government joins in the request. (*See* Dkt. Nos. 117 at 3, 118 at 1–2.)

5 It is therefore ORDERED that the parties' joint motion (Dkt. No. 117) is GRANTED.

6 The parties may contact the courtroom deputy for the criminal duty Magistrate Judge to schedule
7 the plea hearing if they have not yet done so. The Magistrate Judge is DIRECTED to make a
8 record of both Defendants' consent to a remote proceeding.

9 DATED this 23rd day of February 2022.



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11 John C. Coughenour
12 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
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